

# Rural employment and decent work at FAO

## News from the Web



“Eradicate poverty and hunger” is the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) set out by world leaders in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000). It includes the target 1.B “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”. Decent rural employment is key to achieving food security and alleviating poverty. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has committed, through its Strategic Framework, to ensure that decent rural employment creation is integrated into agricultural and rural development policies, programmes and partnerships.

### Welcome to the first edition of FAO's news on rural employment and decent work!

This issue is dedicated to inform readers about the centrality of gender-equitable decent rural employment for poverty reduction and food security and to share some of the work FAO has been carrying out during the first six months of 2011 on this important topic.

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### Knowledge, policy advice and partnerships

“FAO seeks to support member countries in placing decent rural employment at the centre of integrated approaches for rural development. This is ensured through knowledge generation, advocacy, technical support to build national capacities, policy advice and engagement in strong partnerships. Currently, a main priority is mainstreaming rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO's work as well as in strategies and policies at national, regional and global levels. In 2011, FAO developed guidance materials with technical assistance from ILO to support FAO's country offices in addressing rural employment and decent work concerns at the country level. FAO also jointly launched with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) a publication and several policy briefs on gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment. Additionally, FAO works with governments to guarantee that FAO Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) promote decent rural employment whereas collaboration with other UN Agencies within the United Nations Joint Programmes fosters synergies towards more integrated approaches at the country level.

### Strategic country intervention

#### Sida-funding supports decent rural employment in Malawi & Tanzania

FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) initiated a three-year country-level intervention “Policy support on rural employment and decent work towards equitable and sustainable livelihoods under conditions of climate change” in 2011. The intervention, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), aims at supporting countries' capacities to promote and mainstream decent rural employment at country level. The focus is on agricultural and rural informal employment, gender equality, rural youth employment promotion, reduction and prevention of child labour in agriculture and employment-related rural-urban linkages. In January, **inception workshops** were organized in both countries to share knowledge on challenges connected to rural employment and decent work at the national level. The workshops served as well to identify opportunities for FAO technical support and increased collaboration with national stakeholders and partners, including relevant governmental institutions, international organizations and civil society organizations, such as major producers' organizations. Child labour prevention in agriculture is one of the main components of the intervention. In May 2011, a **capacity development workshop** on child



labour prevention in agriculture took place in Malawi for senior technical staff, directors and managers from the Ministries of Labour and of Agriculture and Food Security, as well as other national stakeholders. The workshop was jointly supported by FAO and ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). In July 2011 a similar workshop was carried out in Malawi for district-level stakeholders.



Focusing on decent employment for rural youth is another essential component of the intervention. Support to farmers' organizations, unions and cooperatives, in both countries, aims at strengthening these institutions to support employment of rural youth and their enterprises as a means to increase food security and reduce poverty. It constitutes the first step of the Junior Farmer and Field Life Schools (JFFLS) approach to be taken up by institutions, which can foster the inclusion of youth in rural labour markets. Gender equality is a cross-cutting issue in this intervention and is applied throughout all its components. The programme will also target small-scale women farmers working in the informal economy.

### More and better jobs for rural youth

FAO focuses particularly on disadvantaged groups such as youth (15-24 years old) which may encounter additional challenges in finding decent rural employment opportunities. Therefore, FAO, in cooperation with ILO, promotes youth employment and entrepreneurship development, especially in rural areas, through targeted development strategies, policies and programmes.

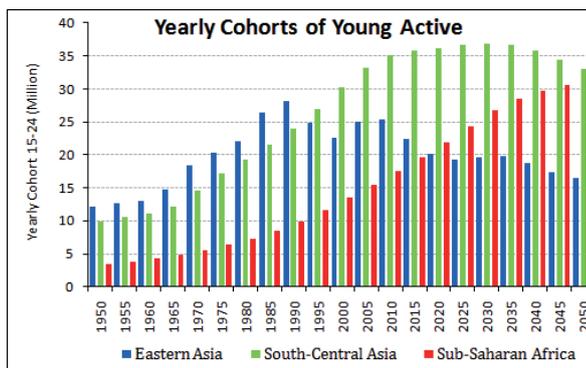
#### African Union pre-Summit on youth

In April 2011, FAO attended the pre-Summit events in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the African Union (AU) Summit on "Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development in Africa" (Malabo, Equatorial Guinea from 23 June - 1 July 2011). FAO delivered the presentation "Creating New Jobs in Agriculture for Rural Youth", providing practical recommendations for the Heads of State, such as the explicit inclusion of youth and decent work in the AU Summit and within the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) implementation process. As part of the steering committee of the AU Summit, FAO prepared and presented a position paper on the challenges faced by rural youth, stressing the central role of youth in the process of



agricultural and rural development, and acknowledging the challenge ahead of the increasing number of youth entering the labour

market through 2050 and beyond. Emphasis was placed on FAO's collaboration with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to ensure that decent employment for youth becomes a central feature in the CAADP implementation process.



Source : Bruno Losch, World Bank, 2010

#### "Jobs for Peace" in Nepal wraps up

FAO and ILO worked together on the **United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP) "Jobs for Peace"** in Nepal. Through FAO interventions nearly 2,300 young women and men in agriculture gained employment opportunities in off-farm and non-farm activities in two districts of the central region (Parsa and Rautahat). The project promoted the peaceful gathering of young people and communities through youth-led empowerment projects, business development and social development activities, facilitating communication and thus contributing to dialogue and strengthening the peace building process. Main accomplishments of the programme were that the youth were trained and consequentially integrated as members in selected cooperatives have been able to access markets (local and national), started to make an income out of agro-business, access technical services through extension services etc. The programme successfully ended in March 2011.

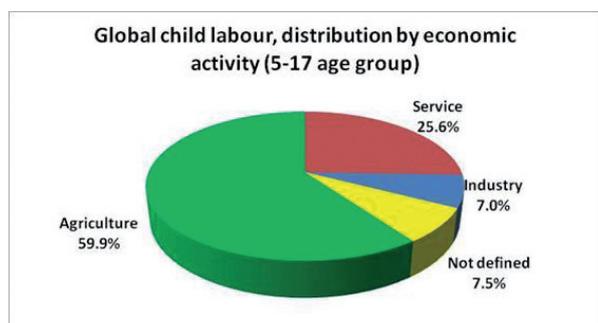
#### Preventing and reducing child labour

In May 2010, a global conference was held in The Hague in order to reignite commitment to a world free of the worst forms of child labour by 2016. FAO participated in this conference, where the **Roadmap for Achieving the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour by 2016** was adopted. In 2011, FAO continues its efforts to prevent and reduce child labour in agriculture in order to achieve poverty reduction and food security for all, especially through the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour (IPCCL).

#### Training on hazardous child labour in agriculture

FAO participated in and contributed to a training course on child labour in agriculture "**Harvesting a future without child labour: eliminating harmful practices in agriculture**" held in May 2011 in Turin, Italy. Other participants were from governments, workers' and employers' organizations as well as international

development organizations. The training course aimed to develop participants' capacities and knowledge on child labour in agriculture, including fisheries and aquaculture, forestry and livestock rearing, and on strategies **to prevent and reduce child labour in agriculture**, which employs almost 60% of global child labour. Through this workshop, the participants became familiar with the concepts and terminology related to child labour and the consequences of hazardous work in agriculture for children's health and education, and ultimately for food security and agricultural and rural development. Participants also had the opportunity to reflect on policy options for reducing child labour, such as taking an integrated livelihoods approach, and addressing child labour concerns in agriculture and rural development programmes.



Source : ILO Global Report on Child Labour, 2010

### Raising awareness on World Day Against Child Labour

This year the World Day Against Child Labour “Warning! Children in hazardous work - End child labour” brought together national governments, employers’ organizations, trade unions, civil society and millions of children and adults throughout the world to put a global spotlight on hazardous child labour, and call for urgent action to tackle the problem. FAO organized a Rome-based event on hazardous child labour in agriculture. Indeed, most hazardous child labour is found in crop production, forestry, livestock rearing, fisheries and aquaculture. In addition to raising



awareness on child labour and the hazards and risks children face in undertaking agricultural work (including exposure to pesticides), a discussion on how FAO can better contribute to tackle this major issue through its work was facilitated.

### The Rotterdam Convention side event

On 22 June 2011, FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) and Plant Production and Protection Division (AGPM) jointly organized with ILO a side event for the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the **Rotterdam Convention “Vulnerable groups and pesticides exposure; Joining forces to reduce hazardous child labour in agriculture”**. The event raised awareness on hazardous child labour in agriculture, particularly with regards to the use of pesticides and

children's greater vulnerability to exposure. It brought together agricultural and labour stakeholders to identify synergies between child labour initiatives and the implementation of the Rotterdam Convention, in order to strengthen the data collection process for informed decision making on pesticide regulation and to reduce hazardous child labour.

### Other news ...

#### FAO supporting the CAADP process

FAO is committed to supporting the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process. During the 7th CAADP Partnership Platform Meeting, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon in March 2011, FAO organized a joint side event with ILO on **“Rural employment in Africa with a special focus on youth and women”**. This awareness-raising event underlined the centrality of rural employment and decent work for poverty reduction and food security. The importance of targeting rural women and youth was emphasized as a means of increasing agricultural production and empowering rural communities. FAO presented the different challenges and opportunities linked to decent rural employment and stressed the importance of mainstreaming it within the CAADP implementation process, especially in the post-Compact phase.

#### NEPAD Rural Futures Programme

FAO participated in the Rural Futures Initiative strategic meeting, organized by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May 2011. The **Rural Futures Programme**, launched in October 2010, seeks to advance a more integrative and transformative development model through a multi-sectoral approach which takes into account poverty reduction, agriculture and climate change. The programme recognizes that agriculture and the rural economy are vital components for structural change. FAO's contribution to the event focused on the centrality of employment in agricultural and rural economies and advocated to devote more efforts to Africa's rural youth as a pivotal step towards sustainable food security. FAO presented the Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) concept to stakeholders as an example of an innovative, gender-equitable approach that supports rural youth employment and entrepreneurship development. This method can support CAADP's goal to achieve food security and reduce poverty in rural Africa.

#### Policy seminar series on high food prices



In the context of the FAO Initiative on Soaring Food Prices, a series of **subregional policy seminars on high food prices and food price volatility** was organized for decision-makers from Government Ministries (Agriculture, Trade

and Finance) to exchange experiences on appropriate measures in response to high food prices. In May 2011, ESW contributed to the subregion's seminars in Tunis, Tunisia for the North African region and in Lilongwe, Malawi for the Southern African region. FAO harvested this opportunity to promote rural employment as a crucial means to respond to food price crises. Since working poverty and unemployment increasingly represent a major cause of vulnerability to shocks, including soaring food prices and price volatility, FAO emphasized the need to focus on gender-sensitive youth employment promotion. FAO discussed the challenges and opportunities offered by employment-based safety nets, such as public employment programmes.

### Closing the gender gap for agricultural development

On International Women's Day (8 March, 2011) agricultural experts from the UN, governments, academia, foundations and farmers' organizations came to Rome to discuss the findings of FAO's flagship publication ***The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2010–11 on "Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development"***. The report reflects on gender differences in access to agricultural inputs in developing countries and emphasizes the importance of gender equality in promoting agricultural development and food

security. The publication affirms that if women in rural areas had the same access to productive resources and opportunities as men, agricultural production could be increased and the number of hungry people reduced by 100-150 million globally.

After the successful launch in March, the publication was disseminated throughout the world. Staff members from FAO's Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division (ESW) traveled to several countries to hold presentations, discussions and press conferences on the findings and policy recommendations of the SOFA 2010-11.

### Master on Applied Labour Economics for Development

Jointly with ILO, FAO held a "Rural Employment" seminar in the **Master on Applied Labour Economics for Development (MALED)** at the Turin School of Development (ITC-ILO), Italy. The course highlighted contemporary global labour market challenges. Rural employment promotion as a means for food security and poverty reduction was discussed as a necessary condition for economic growth, rural development and social transformation. The concepts of decent work as well as the challenges of addressing decent work in rural areas were presented along with concrete examples of policies and good practices aimed at creating an enabling environment.

## Recent publications:

### ***Gender and rural employment: Differentiated pathways out of poverty and seven related policy briefs***



These publications represent a first step in providing policy makers, development practitioners, civil society and private sector organizations, workers' and employers' organizations, the UN, donors and researchers, with an up-to-date analyses of the issue, examples of innovative success stories and a menu of policy options.

[www.fao-ilo.org/publications3/workshop/presentations010/en/](http://www.fao-ilo.org/publications3/workshop/presentations010/en/)

### ***The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11: Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development***



The *State of Food and Agriculture*, FAO's major annual flagship publication, aims at bringing balanced, science-based assessments of important issues in the field of food and agriculture. While the annual issue stresses the significant contributions to the rural economy in all developing country regions, this year's report highlights the importance of closing the gender gap in agriculture to achieve food security and reduce poverty.

[www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf)

### ***Guidance on how to address rural employment and decent work concerns in FAO country activities and Quick Reference***



These documents are designed to provide key conceptual information, important tools and examples of concrete actions to enable FAO country staff to address rural employment and decent work within their work programmes, projects and activities.

[www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/fao\\_ilo/pdf/DecentWorkGuidance\\_impagWEB\\_DEF.pdf](http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/DecentWorkGuidance_impagWEB_DEF.pdf)

### ***Promoting employment and entrepreneurship for vulnerable youths in West Bank and Gaza Strip***



This case study describes FAO activities to improve youth skills and abilities to generate income in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It also emphasizes the role of women's associations and the creation of youth farmers' clubs grouping Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) graduates in the rural areas, which can help to establish a stable basis for rural people to gain voice and representation.

[www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1450e/i1450e00.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i1450e/i1450e00.pdf)

### ***Decent rural employment: Key for poverty reduction and food security***



This brochure highlights the centrality of decent rural employment in reducing poverty and increasing food security. It also explains how FAO's work in this area is part the Organization's Strategic Framework and is guided by FAO's Core Objectives in order to build countries' capacities to address decent rural employment in national policies and programmes.

[www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/fao\\_ilo/pdf/RuralEmployment\\_leaflet.pdf](http://www.fao-ilo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fao_ilo/pdf/RuralEmployment_leaflet.pdf)